

corn
hammers against the struts
pulling out
over scrub oak
and low maple
above your house
where the French flag waves to WWI
fighter aces drunk on sky
and the French countryside
and the Marne interchanging
loop after loop.

Reflections in a Frozen Pond

Watching skaters
upside down
broken in pieces
moving over blue lights
on cathedral glass
dancing through darkness

watching fire on the ice
hissing itself to death
a few logs popping knots
a few sparks lost in the Alpes de Provence

watching the shadows of women
thirty years old
some married, some not
whirling past me
struggling to keep their beauty
upside down

watching the slimness of girls
bending skates
into the unmarked glass
testing their innocence

watching myself
drinking cognac
upside down
the moon in a slush pool

I look up to see myself
hair gone white
a face of frost
death on a bobsled beside me
as, skiis dipped
I wave myself away taking the steepest slope
down into the darkness.

-- Ben Pleasants

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